The Sketch

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GLITTERING GINGER.

GINGER ROGERS' *new film is called "Lady in the Dark," but there is nothing dim or sombre about the costumes she is wearing for it! Witness this wonderful get-up of red and gold sequins combined with rich dark mink. The picture is a Paramount production in Technicolor, with a series of gorgeous sets, and plenty of lovely girls prancing about in them. Her current picture, R.K.O. Radio's "Tender Comrade" comes to the Odeon, Leicester Sq. on Good Friday.*

MOTLEY NOTES.

By ALAN KEMP.

Believe It or Not.

I must be a particularly credulous person, because I have always had a childlike faith in the sea-serpent. I admit that I have never seen him, and possibly I never shall; but that proves nothing, for I do not consider him half as incredible as some of the things I *have* seen. Fish, it is true, have always attracted liars; but the liars would find it hard to beat some of the flights of imagination which nature has admittedly made with creatures of the deep. You can see some of them in any aquarium, and they are fantastic enough to make you wonder whether there may not be others far more fantastic which are unknown to science. Go to the whale, thou sceptic; if you can have a whale, it seems to me you can have almost anything.

The Gate-Crasher.

However, whales are captured every day; and it *is* a little unfortunate that, although people have been talking about Leviathan throughout the ages, they have never caught him. Perhaps that is just as well for journalists, who otherwise would be robbed of an important vested interest; but from the point of view of the general public, a sea-serpent in a glass case would certainly be a box-office smash-hit. That is why I greatly regret that the inhabitants of Magallanes, Chile—of which, I fear, I had never heard before—seem to have missed a magnificent opportunity. They have (it is reported) been visited by a Behemoth, measuring 16 ft. long and weighing over a ton (it is not stated how these particulars were ascertained), which not only rose from the deep in all its majesty, but paraded the streets, in a swaggering manner. The citizenry, I regret to say, instead of putting the intruder in a bag, ran shrieking in all directions; but these Latins are very emotional.

More Trouble in South America.

Well, there you are. "I know not how the truth may be, I tell the tale as 'twas told to me." The theory is that it may have been a giant ray, or devil fish. These little pets are known to measure 20 ft. across, to weigh over 4,000 lb., and to have vast gaping mouths, with a complicated arrangement of fans for waving meals (including incautious divers and pearl-fishers) to the table. If nature produces a beast of that kind, why not the grand Leviathan? Another theory is possible, namely, that this is a new kind of amphibious enemy submarine; though why it should choose Magallanes as its strategic objective I cannot guess. Anyhow, I record this scientific event because I like to think that even in the midst of war we do not forget old peace-time friends like the sea-serpent. Besides, no journalist yet has ever been able to resist the lure of this evergreen "copy," and I am no exception to the rule.

"I suggest something a little more subtle than 'pelting the living daylights out of them!'" (DRAWN BY STARKE.)

Fiend in Human Form.

Monsters, of course, are not confined to the deep; there are always those "monsters in human form" of whom we are all so fond. France seems to specialise in them, particularly the variety popularly known as Bluebeard. For many years the late M. Landru was thought to hold the open title as a Human Fiend, but Dr. Petiot, of Paris, if all they say of him is true, is now an easy winner. I do not propose to describe the doctor's scientific methods; if authentic, they are too gruesome for jest; but what strikes me about them—again, if authentic—is that our blood-curdling novelists and scenario-writers still have a lot to learn. I do not think the boldest of them would have dared to depict the Human Fiend sitting at a periscope and watching the agonies of his victims in the torture-chamber. May it be that Dr. Petiot is too good, or too bad, to be true? That, as a monster, he is of the Magallanes school? And that I, weak creature that I am, am again succumbing to a journalist's natural temptations? I shouldn't be surprised!

Blithe Spirit.

I wonder sometimes whether these ogres of real life have carried to its extreme that peculiar form of madness which delights in painful practical jokes (and nearly all practical jokes are painful). There was a wag once who thought it would be frightfully funny to tell (quite falsely) an impressionable married woman that her husband had just

"Wotcher mean . . . you spent the best part of 1942 with 'er?"
"My nine days' leave. That was the best part of it!"
DRAWN BY WILSON FENNING.

SALVAGE ALL YOUR OLD LETTERS—FOR VICTORY

been run over by a train and had lost both legs. The lady reacted as any loyal wife should do; she threw high-strikes, and was not to be consoled even when she was assured that it was all a bit of high-spirited fun. But then she did a very sensible thing; she went to a good solicitor, who launched her upon a somewhat novel action at law, in which she recovered substantial damages. All the world applauded. It is more difficult to deal with the sort of menace who, the other day, telephoned a wife, as from the War Office, that her Medical Officer husband was seriously injured, and the following day telephoned that he had died—only a short time before he walked into the house, on leave, as large as life. I find even the Dr. Petiots more credible than this sort of social pest; but I suppose war breeds all sorts of freaks.

Joint in the Harness.

There might have been more justification for a false casualty report in the case of a Merchant Navy skipper who has been in the news. He commands an 800-ton coasting tanker, and this is his score to date—300 air-raid alerts, 100 bombing attacks in port, twelve bombings and aerial-torpedo attacks at sea, and four U-boat raids. He naturally has developed a certain contempt for threats to his health. But that is just where he is wrong. These indestructible warriors are not as tough as they think, and this one, as soon as he arrived home on leave, went down with a bad cold and has been absent from duty for weeks. The Luftwaffe is one thing and the microbe is quite another. I expect the gallant skipper will be much relieved to get to sea again, away from all the manifold perils of the land.

Postman's Knock.

For one thing, landlubbers, as I am sure the skipper must have found, are apt nowadays to be very fussy and irritable. They have even been making a pother in the House of Commons about the way the postman knocks on the door. Actually, he must not knock twice, much less perform a spirited tattoo, for fear of disturbing the household! I am astonished to find that the Post Office regulations support this peevish complaint, for they command the postman to knock or ring once only. I had always supposed that the postman's crisp, manly double knock (at houses which still have knockers) was the very sign of his profession, as distinctive as a policeman's boots or a barber's views on the weather. Most households, I should have thought, welcomed the sound, except the cat who is aroused from slumber and the dog who feels it his duty to utter a proprietary bark of protest. But nowadays, no doubt, we must think of the night-workers who woo sleep during daylight, and in deference to them the postman must limit himself in future to one knock. Everybody is rationed, so why not postmen? The size and quality of the single knock still remains at the discretion of each postman.

Fun of the Fair.

This is only another illustration of the fact that we, whether we be postmen or just ordinary persons, cannot have all the fun we want during a war. No, not even in a Funfair. Frequenting funfairs is one of the simple pleasures of life which, unfortunately, I have missed, though I have often had a splendid time among the automatic machines on piers and promenades at the seaside — in fact, they are, to me, the most interesting part of any seaside resort. Recently the nice question has arisen whether fun is the same thing as "entertainment"; and, further, whether a funfair is a "place" of entertainment. On those two points depends the further important point whether a funfair is a place of entertainment which needs a justices' licence; and the law now says that it is. A place, you see, is no less a "place of entertainment" because you supply part of the entertainment yourself by your skill at pin bagatelle or at knocking Aunt Sally. Moral — well, I have indicated one; and, as I am in a sententious mood, I will add another, which is that there is very little fun in this world which you can get for nothing. You may have noticed it yourself.

"I always said the window should have been *here*!" (DRAWN BY BEAUCHAMP.)

The Up and Up.

If you do happen to want—and who doesn't?—an innocent and inexpensive form of fun, it seems that you can get it by jumping upstairs five or six steps at a time. If you are getting on in years, I suppose the fun consists in seeing whether you drop dead or not. I never knew that this was a recognised form of sport until I learned from *The Times* that a former Master of Trinity used to make a point of leaping up steps in public, and held firmly that this was entirely consistent with his academic dignity. It is a knotty question. You may remember that it arose in the case of the Bishop of Rum-ti-foo. Though he stoutly maintained his right to shake a leg whenever so disposed, he was advised

[Continued overleaf.

"I'm afraid I can't hear a word of what's being said."
"Well, you weren't intended to. . . . This is a private conversation." (DRAWN BY L. B. MARTIN.)

Continued.]
that popular feeling among the primitives of Rum-ti-foo was more conservative.

> But if they saw their Bishop land,
> His leg supported in his hand,
> The joke they would not understand,
> 'Twould pain them very much.

On the whole, I think they were right. If once dons and professors and Heads of Houses began to behave like kangaroos, we should have the Lord Chancellor doing the splits on the Woolsack and the Speaker somersaulting into the Chair. No! There is a time and place for everything.

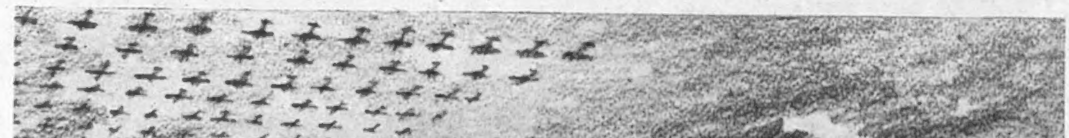
My Ducats and My Daughter.

And that goes for the Stock Exchange, too. The question arises, is settling-day the time, and is the Stock Exchange the place, for a woman — a *nice* woman, of course? I am somewhat perturbed to see that Mrs. Churchill thinks so, and goes so far as to say: "I should like to think I had a stockbroker daughter." I hate to contradict a lady, but would it really be wise? One would be morally bound, I suppose, to go to one's daughter for hot tips and sure things, and, to judge by my own experience with stockbrokers, that might severely strain the affectionate relations which ought to exist between parent and child. There is, perhaps, this to be said for the idea, that it might be a great opportunity for that feminine intuition of which we have all heard so much. But I remain doubtful; I am definitely cagey about intuitional investments, because I have tried some. Besides, in my moss-grown, Victorian way I do not like to think of women, to whom I look for more gentle qualities, in the hard, materialistic atmosphere of the Stock Exchange. It goes against the grain to mix them up with bulls and bears. In short, I will tango with an attractive girl, but not contango with her. But that only shows, I suppose, that I am about a century out of date.

"Could you give me a clean ten-shilling note with my change, as I've forgotten to bring paper to wrap up my joint."
DRAWN BY WELLAND.

Still that Apple!

In which respect, I differ only in degree from a husband who was before the court the other day for failing to maintain his wife. He explained that he could not afford to do so on his wages of £4 a week, but that he was really a very economical sort of person, because his diet consisted solely of apples, at the rate of five or six pounds a day. I have been trying to work out the mathematics of this, and am still wondering (*a*) how and where one can get forty pounds of apples a week, and (*b*) how one can consume apples at that rate and support life on £4 a week. It would be difficult enough on carrots. However, I am bound to say that there is precedent for this curious matrimonial plea. I seem to remember that at a very early date in history somebody refused to maintain his wife as the result of an apple diet. Strange how history repeats itself!



"Looks more like Hamburg to me . . . Berlin's over the gas works."
DRAWN BY SILENUS.

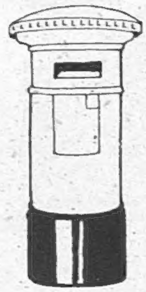
The eighty-sixth of our SERIES OF PLATES IN FULL COLOUR *published in this issue of "The Sketch" is by* DAVID WRIGHT.

"WHAT I SAYS ABOUT 'ER IS THAT SHE'S VERY AMPHIBIOUS."

DRAWN BY FRANK REYNOLDS.

Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.



MY DEAR ROBERT — Little No-well was christened after the Children's Service on Sunday afternoon. She was given the names of Carol Matilda, but even the Vicar called her Little No-well at the party afterwards, so Faith and the Conductor might have saved themselves the trouble of choosing other names for her.

Faith wore powder-blue and looked quite lovely. Lady B. and I were Godmothers. Lady B. held Little No-well in her arms at the font, and handed her to the Vicar at the appropriate moment without any bungling. I wore the new frock and hat I had bought for the American Partee, and Mrs. Savernack said: "Why, Henrietta, you look *quite* nice!" in an astonished voice, which depressed me rather.

"Lady B. held Little No-well."

Faith had asked the Awful Dan to be a Godfather, but his mother wrote to say he was away somewhere, creeping about at the bottom of the sea in his submarine, so the Admiral came as proxy. Little No-well is one of those lavish babies who have a great many godparents, but her other Godfather, who is a Cabinet Minister, and her third Godmother, who is something equally grand, were unable to be present, so Lady B. and I could be Queens of the May to our hearts' content.

In the middle of the service the Awful Dan walked in and knelt down beside me, with a very pious expression on his face.

"I suppose you've left your submarine on the beach," I whispered, but he only frowned in a disapproving way.

Faith and the Conductor gave the loveliest party afterwards. To everybody's, even Faith's, delight and astonishment, the Conductor produced a bottle of champagne, which he said he had been keeping ever since he fell in love with Faith, for the christening of his eldest daughter.

"*Well!*" said Faith.

"I hope it won't be corked," said the Admiral anxiously.

"It's the only secret I've ever had from you, darling Faith," said the Conductor, struggling with the wire. The next minute there was a loud Pop! and we all seized glasses and rushed at him, crying: "Don't waste a drop, whatever you do!" and then stood in reverent silence to raise the precious fluid to our lips. It was the Conductor who had to remind us that we were supposed to be drinking his daughter's health.

Lady B., as senior Godmother, came first. She went over to the sofa and bent down and kissed the baby, who was looking as cool and elegant as her mother. "I shan't be here when you're grown up, Little No-well," she said gently, "but I hope you'll have a happy life. I don't hope you'll never have troubles, because you'll be a poor sort of woman if you don't, but I hope that when your troubles come you'll take them without a blink, and enjoy yourself in spite of them. Now it's Henrietta's turn."

This caught me on the wrong leg. I wished I had prepared a graceful and witty speech, but I knew it was no good attempting anything of that kind at the last minute. I held out one finger and the baby's flower-like hand closed round it. "Well, Little No-well," I said, "I hope that by the time you know what's what the world will have stopped going mad and we'll be at peace, and that you'll never have another war in your lifetime."

"I held out one finger."

"I absolutely disagree with Henrietta," said Dan (who, believe me or believe me not, enjoys his submarine). "I think Little No-well will make the sweetest WREN. I shall be Admiral of the Fleet by then," he went on modestly, "and I shall take her out to dinner and everybody will say, 'Look at that Dirty Old Man,' not realising, of course, that I'm her Godfather. Well, here's to your bright eyes, Little No-well, and I hope you won't want to marry a Conscientious Objector when you grow up."

After that some of the guests went home. Little No-well's Nanny came and bore her away, and the rest of us drew our chairs up to the fire, yawning, as people do who have drunk champagne in the afternoon.

"It was a lovely christening!" said the Conductor.

"The nicest I've ever been to," said Lady B. "All the same, when we've got such magnificent marriage and burial services, it does seem a pity that our christening service should be so very uninspiring."

"I don't think you ought to say that," said Mrs. Savernack.

"I must say," said Dan, "all those bits about sin are rather depressing for a little baby."

"Poor Little No-well," said the Admiral. "I'm sure she hasn't got any sins."

"Oh, yes she has," said Faith darkly.

"But you've got a Nanny to deal with them, Faith darling," said Charles.

"How *did* you manage to get a Nanny?" cried everybody at once.

"I just got her," said Faith. "Don't all glare at me like that."

"Did you enjoy acting your Shakespeare, Henrietta?" said Mrs. Savernack, tactfully changing the subject.

I roused myself from an uneasy dose. "No," I said.

"She's got to do it again next week," said Mrs. Whinebite brightly.

"'Don't waste a drop, whatever you do!'"

"I won't!" I cried, leaping out of my chair. "I absolutely won't, Mrs. Whinebite!"

"Tut, tut!" said Mrs. Savernack. "What a scene about nothing."

"I don't see why Henrietta should if she doesn't want to," said Lady B.

"As a Doctor's Wife it is Henrietta's duty to do these things," said Mrs. Whinebite.

"I really don't see," said Charles mildly, "why Henrietta should have to act Shakespeare because she's married to me."

"I haven't *time*!" I cried. "There's my work."

"All that silly writing," said Mrs. Whinebite, "and the Second Front starting any minute. You ought to be ashamed."

Charles waved a hand:

"'A would-be satirist, a hired Buffoon,
A monthly scribbler of some low lampoon,'"

he said airily.

"That's Henrietta to a T," said Faith. "How clever of you, Charles."

"He's been reading that book about Byron," said the Conductor, and Charles, who had been hoping to pass the couplet off as his own, looked disappointed.

"Those were the days," I said, hoping to wean Mrs. Whinebite from Shakespeare. "I wish I'd been alive then. All those Whig hostesses and their lovers."

"Really, Henrietta!" said Mrs. Savernack.

"There's a dark side to Henrietta's character," said Dan.

"Poor Charles!" said Faith.

"I like it," said Charles. "It's kept me amused for years."

Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend,

HENRIETTA.

KING PETER'S BRIDE——THE QUEEN OF YUGOSLAVIA.

King Peter of Yugoslavia and PRINCESS ALEXANDRA OF GREECE *were married recently at the Yugoslav Embassy in London. Four monarchs attended the ceremony—King George VI. who was best man to his godson, the King of the Hellenes who gave the bride away, the King of Norway, and the Queen of the Netherlands. The bride, who arrived with her mother, Princess Aspasia of Greece, wore a wedding gown of white satin with a short train, an old lace veil, and flowers in her hair, according to the Greek custom. King Peter was in the uniform of the Yugoslav Air Force. The wedding—a triple ceremony in Greek, Serbian and English—was conducted by Archbishop Germanos of the Greek Church, and Archpriest Ristanovitz of the Serbian Church, to which King Peter belongs. The bride will not be crowned Queen of Yugoslavia until the day when her husband returns to his country to be crowned again.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY CECIL BEATON.

CINEMA CAMEOS.

By C. A. LEJEUNE.

"THE HEART OF A NATION," at the newly reopened Academy Cinema, tells the story of a single French family, from the Franco-Prussian War to the beginning of this one. The family home is in Montmartre, still a country village outside the capital when the Germans are shelling Paris in 1871. The small boy who stands in a bread queue during that first siege grows up to be a schoolmaster, loses his own son in the 1914-18 war, and sees his grandson caught up in the trouble of 1939.

The film, which somebody is certain to call a "Cavalcade" of France, is frankly episodic, and some of the episodes don't add up to much. They seem to have been introduced merely to lend a topical note, to mark some historical milestone, such as the invention of the aeroplane, or indicate a current mood. The sequence in which M. Jouvet goes to the tropics, for example, and presumably dies there, would seem to have no other purpose than to hint that the French have colonies overseas. The Awful Scene, too, in which the daughter of the house runs a mannequin show in the degenerate 'twenties, with presumably some other attractions on the side, has little to do with the main theme. It is merely unclear, vaguely unpleasant and dowdily presented, with one of the worst sets I have ever seen in a class French production.

The film is at its best when it sticks to the daily, unsignificant events of family life—the parlour chats, the weddings, the birth of the first baby, the visits from relatives. *Then* it has conviction, flashes of humour and the charm of an old album. Raimu is the greatest possible help as a naughty uncle from Marseilles, known to the ladies of the Quarter as Toto. You will like Suzy Prim, too, as the woman who is too busy mothering other people's children to marry.

A big canvas, a talented cast, a sympathetic director and fine moments—but not a great film. Why? The answer, I think, lies in the frailty of the mood. The spirit behind the picture seems delicate and weak. It seems to say, rather hopelessly, that the thriftless and jealous Germans will always invade France for the sake of her earth, her wheat and her vineyards. Three times in the memory of living man they have done it. They have been thrown out, it is true, but they have somehow always managed to come back again. A cloud of beautiful, but not very helpful, self-pity seems trailed across the film. There is nothing the poor French can do about the wicked Germans, it suggests, but hope for the best and mind their own business.

Students of national psychology may find an interesting relation between the mood of the film and the conditions under which it was made. "The Heart of a Nation" was the last film Duvivier produced in his own country. It was made in the ominous spring of 1940. The last shots were taken only a few days before the Germans marched into Paris. The invaders seized all prints and negatives of current films. Only one copy of "The Heart" was smuggled out of Paris, buried somewhere by the roadside, and taken across to America when the Germans had given up looking for it. All this is told us rather ponderously in a foreword by Charles Boyer, seated at a studio desk in Hollywood. M. Boyer adds that the other film negatives were given back after scrutiny, but not "The Heart of a Nation." This simple film reveals so much of the spirit of France, he hints, that the Germans wouldn't have it at any price. A Briton in his fighting mood may find this an odd observation. If this *were* the true spirit of France, you'd think the Germans would be delighted.

A democratic film with a still more curious message for the times is "LIFEBOAT" (Odeon), written by John Steinbeck and directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Make no mistake about it, "Lifeboat" is a brilliant virtuoso piece. I doubt if the chubby director has ever done a better technical job. It is so well acted, by Tallulah Bankhead, Walter Slezak, and others; so cleverly constructed; and so dramatically forceful, that it compels the attention of the audience from first to last. It is a stunning film—but stunning in a couple of senses.

What on earth can have prevailed on these people to tell this story of Nazi supremacy and Allied ineptitude at this juncture? For that is what "Lifeboat" surely amounts to. Let us look at it carefully, and examine its implications. Straight away, behind the credit titles, you see the funnel of a torpedoed freighter sinking beneath the waves. The camera sweeps the littered waters, and finally comes to rest on a lifeboat, in which is seated Miss Bankhead, sleek and elegant in a mink coat, taking pictures of the wreck with a newsreel camera. One by one, seven other survivors clamber into the boat, and lastly they haul aboard the captain of the submarine (Walter Slezak) that sank the freighter.

There they all are, the nine of them, in the narrow confines of the lifeboat, where they stay until the end of the picture. Naturally, they don't *want* to stay there. The eight democrats want to get to Bermuda. The Nazi wants to get to a German supply ship. Since the Allies are eight to one, and four of them professional sailors, you'd think they'd at any rate get part of the way to Bermuda.

But they don't. They immediately start wrangling among themselves. They can't take their bearings. They don't know how to navigate. One of them falls asleep on watch, so that they lose another of their number overboard. They can't decide who is to take charge of the boat. None of them has the character or resource to command the confidence of the rest. None of them, that is to say, except the German. He has all the qualities of leadership. Not only is he a capable seaman, but he knows what he wants, and is working to a plan. He amputates one man's gangrened leg when no one else can do so. He takes control of the tiller while the others are floundering helplessly in a storm. He never sleeps. He is never thirsty or tired. He appropriates the oars. He sings jolly German songs. He makes the democrats pipe—literally—to his tune. And after a while, there they all sit, helpless and confused, while Superman rows them away towards the German supply ship.

He doesn't actually get them there, because the discovery that the Nazi is carrying a compass, a water-flask, food tablets and energy pills, and has also murdered the legless sailor in the night, brings a temporary burst of blood-lust to the surviving Allies. They jump on him in a bunch, bash him on the head and push him overboard. But

THE BEST PLAYS.

Starred by "The Sketch." * * *=*highest value.*

* * * "BLITHE SPIRIT" (*Duchess*). Noel Coward's play. Betty Ann Davies, Cecil Parker, Irene Browne, Beryl Measor.

* * * "PINK STRING AND SEALING WAX" (*Duke of York's*). 1880 Brighton comedy. Iris Hoey, Dorothy Hyson, David Horne.

* * "THE DANCING YEARS" (*Adelphi*). Ivor Novello in his romantic musical play, with Muriel Barron and Roma Beaumont.

* * "SOMETHING IN THE AIR" (*Palace*). Musical, with Jack Hulbert, Cicely Courtneidge.

* * "ARC DE TRIOMPHE" (*Phœnix*). Ivor Novello's Paris cavalcade—1906-1925—with Mary Ellis, Raymond Lovell, Peter Graves, Elisabeth Welch.

* * "PANAMA HATTIE" (*Piccadilly*). Musical comedy, with Bébé Daniels, Richard Hearne, Max Wall, Ivan Brandt, Claude Hulbert.

* * "STRIKE A NEW NOTE" (*Prince of Wales*). George Black's revue, with the rising generation and Sid Field.

* * "MY SISTER EILEEN" (*Savoy*). American slapstick with Sally Gray, Coral Browne, Max Bacon.

* * "ARSENIC AND OLD LACE" (*Strand*). Witty, murderous farce. Lilian Braithwaite, Mary Jerrold, Naunton Wayne, Frank Pettingell, Edmund Willard.

* * "WHILE THE SUN SHINES" (*Globe*). Rattigan's inter-allied complications without tears. Jane Baxter, Ronald Squire, Hugh McDermott.

* * "THE LISBON STORY" (*Hippodrome*). Play with music.

* * "SWEETER AND LOWER" (*Ambassadors*). Second edition of "Sweet and Low" revue: Hermione Gingold and Henry Kendall.

* * "JUNIOR MISS" (*Saville*). Comedy with the accent on youth. Joan White, Peggy Cummins.

* * "THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT" (*Aldwych*). Wonderful acting by the Lunts in Robert Sherwood play.

* "A SOLDIER FOR CHRISTMAS" (*Wyndham's*). Light comedy: Joyce Barbour, Robert Beatty.

* "THE DRUID'S REST" (*St. Martin's Theatre*). Emlyn Williams's light comedy, with Gladys Henson, Michael Shepley.

* "AN IDEAL HUSBAND" (*Westminster*). Donat's ideal Wilde revival. Irene Vanbrugh, Martita Hunt, Esme Percy.

* "THIS WAS A WOMAN" (*Comedy*). Sonia Dresdel, John Bryning, Nova Pilbeam in effective melodrama.

* "LOVE FOR LOVE" (*Haymarket*). Congreve comedy with John Gielgud, Yvonne Arnaud, Leslie Banks, Leon Quartermaine.

* "TEN LITTLE NIGGERS" (*Cambridge*). Agatha Christie's thriller. Linden Travers, Allan Jeayes, Terence de Marney.

* "ACACIA AVENUE" (*Vaudeville*). Comedy. Gordon Harker, Hubert Gregg, Dorothy Hamilton, Megs Jenkins.

* "THE LOVE RACKET" (*Victoria Palace*). High-speed musical with Arthur Askey and Carol Raye.

N.B.—While we shall always do our best to keep this list up to date, we cannot hold ourselves responsible for any errors which may occur. Consult your daily paper; ring up the theatre to avoid disappointment.

Twentieth Century-Fox's "Buffalo Bill" is based on the life of the famous Colonel William F. Cody, originator of the Wild West show, and hero of a thousand Red Indian legends. Here Dawn Starlight (LINDA DARNELL), *an educated Indian girl in love with Cody, is caught by Louisa* (MAUREEN O'HARA) *in her bedroom wearing one of her dresses, to see if it would make her look beautiful.*

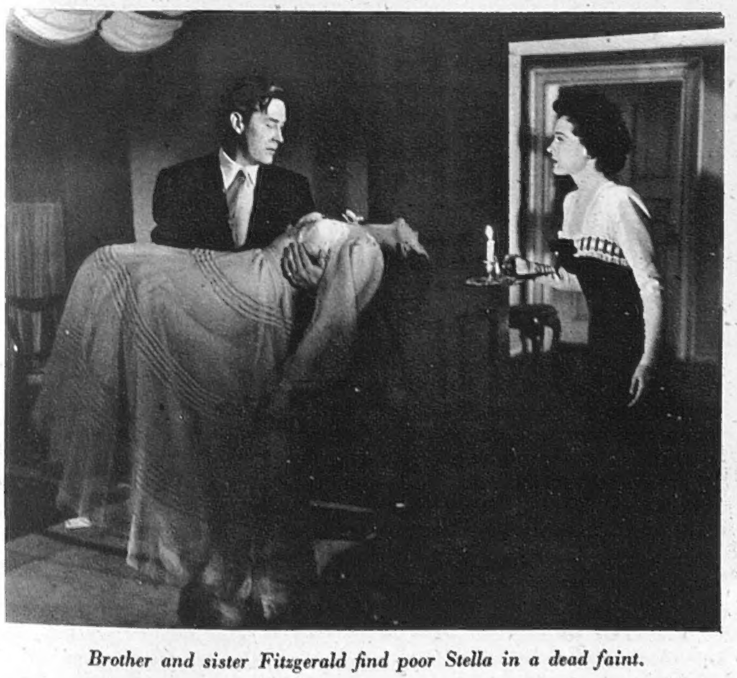
then they relapse into their lethargy again. Somebody suggests that maybe one of them ought to row. "Where to?" asks another. "What for? When we killed the German, we killed our motor."

In the end they are saved, not by their own initiative or courage, but by the accident of a warship on the skyline. And even then, with the rescuing power in sight, they fall to wrangling again among themselves. Two hands come up from the water, and grasp the gunwale of the boat. Another German Superman is fished up out of the sea. One man is for throwing him back. Others say no, he 's only a baby, it 's different this time. On which the Superbaby promptly draws a gun. What, ends the film, with a helpless shrug, what *can* you do with these people?

A thundering ovation greets Bill Cody (JOEL McCREA) *in New York's Madison Square Garden, at the end of one of his magnificent Wild West shows.*

The producers of "Lifeboat"—which has been violently attacked in certain quarters in America—are hurt by the suggestion that there is anything un-American in the theme. Actually, they say, the film started as a technical stunt, in response to "Hitchcock's suggestion that we should lay an entire picture in a lifeboat, and thus turn out the first one-set feature film ever made." Later the plot and characters were worked out, still with a kind of stunt thriller in mind.

"Up to that point"—they say—"we had not the slightest notion of building a theme. We built it, however, quite unconsciously, and suddenly awoke to that fact. Unwittingly, we had set images of the 'soft democracies' into a little world dominated in will and purpose by an aggressor. We found them steering themselves past a sort of Munich, only to run smack against a Warsaw. We saw a rising of civilised people pressed too far."



Brother and sister Fitzgerald find poor Stella in a dead faint.

The serious case against "Lifeboat" is not that it stresses German will and organisation—that is something that has to be taken fully into our calculations. Its fault is rather that it muddles the case for the Allies, by contrasting the typical with the untypical. Nothing in the world can persuade me that those eight democrats in the boat are a representative group of British and American people. If our people had really been like that, so flabby in character and so lacking in gumption, the war would have been over years ago, with the Nazis in London. The impressions of "Lifeboat" are not likely to sap the morale of our audiences, although I hate to think what would be their effect if the film were shown in any neutral country. But so long as films are regarded as part of a nation's war propaganda, it is helpful, I think, to make a clear case for that nation's ideology and will to win.

A more stimulating aspect of the war-picture is presented in the companion film in the Odeon bill, "TUNISIAN VICTORY." This brilliant sequel to "Desert Victory" is the joint work of the British and American Service Units, and carries a main lead credit unexampled in its simple pomp. "The Governments of the United States and Great Britain Present . . ." There is no mood of resignation in "Tunisian Victory." There is no suggestion here that the German is invincible. Tracing the course of a sweeping Allied victory, from its first bold plan—Operation Aerobat—through its steadfast execution, it shows the enemy out-fought, out-worn and out-manœuvred.

"Tunisian Victory" is a rare film, giving a record of factual events with the keen perception of men who have learnt to work in the medium of the cinema. The people responsible for the film are veterans at their job. On the American side we have Colonel Frank Capra, director of the famous "Mr. Deeds," and Walter Huston's son, Captain John Huston, who did "The Maltese Falcon." The British Unit includes Captain Roy Boulting, who cut "Desert Victory," and directed one of the best films ever made in this country, "Thunder Rock." The two Voices heard at intervals throughout the film, representing a typical British Tommy and a typical American Doughboy, are those of Bernard Miles and Burgess Meredith, two of the best actors our respective nations have produced.

These people have done all they know to make "Tunisian Victory" a high record of a high event. There is a concession to sentiment here and there in their work, but then, paradoxical as it may seem, there

"The Uninvited" (Plaza, April 7) is Paramount's adaptation of a best-seller by Dorothy Macardle. Composer Roderick Fitzgerald (RAY MILLAND; *second from left) and sister Pamela* (RUTH HUSSEY; *right) buy a haunted house on the Cornish coast, and contact two spirits—one gentle, one malignant. The former tries to protect Stella* (GAIL RUSSELL); *the latter to destroy her. Dr. Scott (left) is played by* ALAN NAPIER.

is a lot of sentiment in war. Without some sort of spiritual and emotional emolument, it is doubtful whether the average person could endure through war at all. "Tunisian Victory" allows for that human factor in all of us, and—in my opinion—triumphs with it.

PERSONALITIES OF THE WEEK AND NOTABLE EVENTS:

Service girls, recuperating at a British Legion sanatorium, have taken up toy-making. PETER, THE PET RABBIT, POSES AS A MODEL.

MR. W. W. WAKEFIELD, M.P., *gave his eldest daughter,* MISS JOAN ROSEMARY WAKEFIELD, *away when she married Lieut. Antony Edward Montague Raynsford, R.N., at St. Martin-in-the-Fields.*

THE MAYOR OF WESTMINSTER, MR. MAURICE G. GILES, *is watching one-year-old* ANNE JOYCE McRITCHIE *sticking savings stamps on to a portrait of General Montgomery.*

FLIGHT OFFICER JACQUELINE LEIGH-MALLORY, W.A.A.F., *only daughter of Air Chief-Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, is engaged to Flight Officer W. E. (Tony) Doherty, U.S.A.A.F.*

Hospital nurses have to be ready to EVACUATE HELPLESS PATIENTS *at a moment's notice. This is the method by which they are taken out of a ward without having to leave their beds.*

MR. H. E. DU PLESIS, MR. JAMES FITTON, *newly-elected A.R.A., and* MR. HENRY MOORE *acted as selection committee for the Civil Defence Artists' Cooling Gallery show. They are considering a portrait of General Montgomery.*

PICTORIAL REVIEW OF LIFE AS WE LIVE IT TO-DAY.

MISS PATRICIA STAINER, *musical-comedy actress, married* LIEUT. THOMAS J. STEENSON, A.A.F., *of Hyde Park, New York, at St. Saviour's, Pimlico.*

The Allies Mascot Club awards the Dickin Medal for Gallantry to animals. MISS ST. HILL BOURNE *is decorating Beachcomber, a pigeon, for gallantry at Dieppe. The bird is held by* SERGT. ANDRE MEISCHKE.

LIEUT.-COLONEL ANTHONY J. DREXEL BIDDLE, *former U.S.A. Ambassador to the exiled Allied Governments in London, is now Liaison Officer with the exiled Governments, on General Eisenhower's staff.*

DRUM MAJOR LORNA SMITH, A.T.S., *of Croydon, played a prominent part in London's parade and processions in honour of "Salute the Soldier" Week. She looks extremely smart and has tremendous style.*

MR. CECIL BEATON, *artist, photographer, author and stage designer, recently left for India and Chungking for the M.O.I. Before starting he designed scenery and costumes for the H. M. Tennent production of Linklater's "Crisis in Heaven."*

THEIR MAJESTIES THE KING AND QUEEN *and* H.R.H. PRINCESS ELIZABETH *took the salute at Buckingham Palace at the march-past of the Services in connection with "Salute the Soldier" Week.*

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

LORD BRABAZON—*for being a political die-hard but a chessboard revolutionary.*

BORED with the series of opening gambits which have survived many centuries in the ancient game of chess, LORD BRABAZON recently suggested that the King and Queen should change places on the board. This, he said, would abolish all the stock openings ("dead men's openings") which make the first third of each game a dull affair in which every move has been worked out beforehand. How will the pundits react? Lord Brabazon has played chess since he was ten years old.

THEY talk of "swing" and slang it in the House sometimes, but it wasn't the sort used by our AIRFIELD TRAFFIC POLICEMAN to welcome home the R.A.F. bombers on the night of March 22-23, on their return from the 2000-ton attack on Frankfurt. *He* rent the black-out with circles of light to marshal the returning aircraft to their dispersal points.

LIEUTENANT SIMMONS, U.S.A.A.F., performed an outstanding fighter feat recently when in thirty seconds he shot down three Nazi fighters on a long-range fighter escort mission to Augsburg. Lieutenant Simmons is a member of the pioneer Ninth Air Force P-51 Mustang group. He hails from Los Angeles.

THIS AIRFIELD TRAFFIC POLICEMAN—*for greeting the home-coming bombers with swing.*

THE KING summoned French-Canadian MAJOR PAUL TRICQUET to Buckingham Palace and in the privacy of his own apartments pinned on Major Tricquet's battledress the Victoria Cross he won recently in Italy. Major Tricquet won the award in action with the Eighth Army on the Adriatic front. With his company of the Royal 22me Regiment and a Canadian Armoured Regiment, he was given the task of crossing a gully and securing Casa Berardi. Against very heavy machine-gun and mortar fire and huge odds, he and his small force took their objective.

MRS. K. SOMERSBY—*for earning the Premier's thanks with a lollipop.*

FOR MRS. K. SOMERSBY, General Eisenhower's driver, Mr. Winston Churchill had a special greeting when he visited an American airborne unit last week. "Thanks," he said, "for the lozenge you gave me the last time we met."

MISS SUSAN TRAVERS—*for running the gauntlet of a hail of bullets to drive a French General to safety.*

MISS SUSAN TRAVERS, an English nurse, was the only woman involved in the epic stand made by French troops at Bir Hakeim, North Africa. As an M.T.C. driver she drove General Koenig, Fighting French defender of Bir Hakeim, through minefields and fierce fire from enemy snipers to safety when, in June 1942, the garrison was ordered to evacuate the fort. Her car had eleven bullet-holes in it, and one bullet whistled between her and General Koenig. She is the only woman mentioned in the record, "The Eighth Army." Miss Travers has been awarded the Croix de Guerre, presented with the Colonial Medal, and made an Hon. Corporal in the Foreign Legion.

LIEUT. SIMMONS—*for the crowded thirty seconds of glorious life in which he took three Nazi fighters down a peg.*

MAJOR PAUL TRICQUET—*for the one-man Investiture for which he flew from Italy.*

CANADA'S INVASION COMMANDER—
LT.-GEN. H. D. G. CRERAR.

Last week LT.-GEN. H. D. GRAHAM CRERAR, C.B., D.S.O., *commanding the First Canadian Army Corps with the British Eighth Army in Italy, was appointed Commander of the First Canadian Army, and it is assumed that he will lead the Canadian forces in the Allied invasion of the Continent. In making the announcement Colonel Ralston, Canada's Defence Minister, said he wired to General Crerar expressing every confidence in his leadership and in the determination and fighting qualities of the army under his command. Born in 1888, General Crerar was educated at Upper Canada College, Toronto ; and was at the Staff College, Camberley. He served in the Gunners in the last war and was mentioned in despatches.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY KARSH, OF OTTAWA.

RED BALLET STARLETS IN THE MAKING: A SOVIET RUSSIAN CHOREOGRAPHIC SCHOOL.

THE great traditions of the RUSSIAN BALLET, originally laid down by the Imperial schools, were not interrupted by revolution, or by war, and to-day, when our magnificent ally, Soviet Russia, is fully mobilised against the Nazi invaders, the Choreographic Schools continue their work of training

Continued opposite.

" Instep stretched, hands below the level of the shoulder " : *pupils*

JUNIOR PUPILS IN A PRACTICE PERFORMANCE: *Tuchkina leads the young dancers in the " Don Quixote " ballet at the Bolshoi Theatre.*

A class of CHILDREN IN THE FIFTH POSITION, *mirrors so that they*

A lesson in the FIRST ARABESQUE: *The teacher instructs a promising young pupil, Valya Lukina, while other embryo coryphées watch.*

Right: Reminiscent of a Degas picture: YOUNG PUPILS OF THE CHOREOGRAPHIC SCHOOL *trying on their ballet shoes before a lesson.*

... E MARIA LEONTEVA, *well-known teacher, instructs young* ...

Continued.]

dancers, and of creating future artists of the Soviet Republic. Every year the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow, receives its quota of young dancers from the theatre's Choreographic School. Eleven boys and girls graduated last year. Some have been assigned by the Committee of the Arts to the Sverdlovsk Theatre of Opera and Ballet; others will join the State Dance Ensemble of the U.S.S.R., and two (including Maya Plisetskaya) are to join the Bolshoi Branch Theatre. Children enter the school at the age of eight or nine, and receive general education as well as dancing instruction. They also study special subjects such as music, posture, deportment and the history of the theatre and the dance. A practical course on the stage of the Bolshoi Theatre is compulsory. The teachers include great dancers who have retired from the stage, as well as stars who are carrying on their theatre work as well as giving lessons. In common with all the other theatre schools of Moscow, the Choreographic School gives performances for the troops in Red Army Clubs and hospitals.

...dy for the reverence. The room is lined with ... watch themselves.

Sur les pointes: MAYA PLISETSKAYA *(l.), who has just graduated in the Choreographic School, and been accepted by the Bolshoi Theatre; with Lesma Chadarain.*

Life in a ballet school is not all dancing: PROFESSOR TATYANA DYNNIK *is lecturing a class on the history of the theatre.*

N.B. A Coloured plate is inserted in this issue.

FILM-STARS' SWITCH-OVER—DRESS SUIT INTO COAT FROCK.

Fully frilled up at all the pre-war parties, DICK POWELL *and his wife,* JOAN BLONDELL, *piped down like the rest of Hollywood after the events at Pearl Harbour.*

Joan took a look round the house when clothing restrictions came in, and she found Dick's dress suit. Useless to her husband in wartime, Joan saw a charming coat frock in the rough, rather than a grazing-ground for moths.

Dick's cherished "tails" are no more. Designer BILL TRAVILLA, *who made a sketch of Joan's new frock, and the cutter,* MRS. SCHRAM, *look over the cut-up débris, and decide how the cloth is to be made up.*

On the dressmaker's dummy the new dress takes shape. To get the best use of the trousers, they are turned bottom-side up, with the cuffs to form the waist-line.

The mirror shows Joan a nice line, a smart cut. Travilla and Mrs. Schram pin here and pin there, discuss length and other important details.

Seeing the finished dress, Dick can hardly believe his eyes, and feels his sacrifice was well worth while, for Joan's dress is really distinguished—smart, simple, well designed.

WE used to think "dress suit" was a silly name for the black-and-white outfit worn by the lordly male when he decides to be magnificent. "Tails" sounded better for his glad-rags. It took this age of the warring nations to prove that the name "dress suit" has its points, for it is so easily transformed into dress. The best men wear khaki or blue these days, and have little use for glamour duds, so the wife steps in and balks the moths of a banquet. Movie-star Dick Powell and Joan Blondell show you in this series of photographs how tails became a smart, pencil-slim suit for Joan. The material is of fine quality, too. And this change-over can be made with serge, tweeds, or what have you.

HE PLANS OUR WAR FOOD: SIR JACK AND LADY DRUMMOND AT HOME WITH ELIZABETH ANNE.

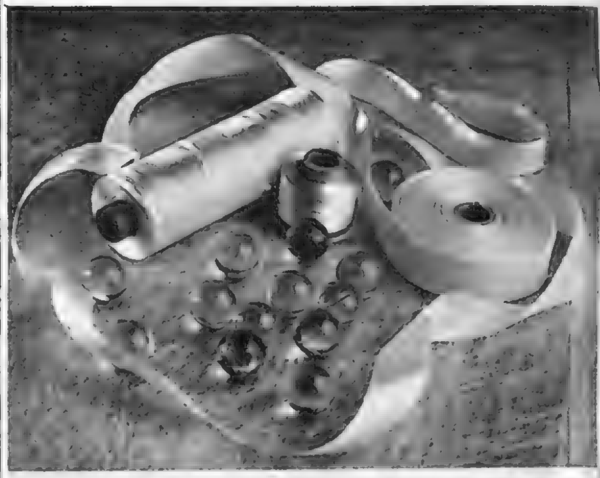
ELIZABETH ANNE DRUMMOND *is a splendid example of her father's ideas on nutrition.*

SHORTLY before the outbreak of war SIR JACK DRUMMOND, D.Sc., F.I.C., was appointed Scientific Adviser to the Ministry of Food, and it is he who has been largely responsible for planning our diet during the war years. In the New Year's Honours List he was created Knight Bachelor for his services, though he has not, as yet, received the accolade. Before the war Sir Jack was Professor of Biochemistry at University College, London; he has made a life study of food and nutrition. Recently he is reported to have said that we are now getting only 15 per cent. less of fats than we did in the pre-war years. Lady Drummond—before her marriage Miss Mabel Helen Straw—takes a great interest in the history of food, and collaborated with her husband in writing "The Englishman's Food"—a historical study of the English diet during three or four centuries.

Teaching the young idea. In miniature, ELIZABETH ANNE *learns the ways of a milk roundsman from her father and mother,* SIR JACK *and* LADY DRUMMOND.

NO LONGER BRITTLE—BUT LIKE: SCIENCE SPINS AND MODERN

She stands at the loom, but she is not spinning wool or cotton; HER YARN IS MADE OF GLASS. It is passing through the leasing reed in the process of warping the yarn.



ALL GLASS! A general view of marbles (used in the manufacture of Fibreglass), yarn and tape lying on top of a base formed of Battery Plate material.

The glass yarn is woven just as if it were cotton or woollen yarn. The operative is here refilling a shuttle with a pirn of glass yarn to reed to insertion into the loom.

IDAGLAS MATTRESSES are made up to suit special requirements. One mattress is backed on both sides with wire netting, and the other on both sides with expanded metal. They are for heat insulation.

These objects look like bobbins of string—but they are EUTEX STAPLE ACID-RESISTING YARN wound on cones, ready for transferring to bobbins for weaving into cloth.

FIBREGLASS would rouse the envy of Cinderella's godmother, for she could only provide her protegée with glass slippers, whereas modern science can now take the brittle shining material, rob it of its tendency to shatter at the slightest concussion, and render it pliable and almost silk-like. Fibreglass is the general term for this remarkable new British product, which is made in various forms; Eutex Glass Yarns to be woven into cloth, Idaglas for Heat

PLIABLE AND ALMOST SILK-WEAVES GLASS TO SERVE NEEDS.

Making Idaglas BATTERY SEPARATORS. A large sheet of fabricated glass fibres being cut by means of a hand guillotine into the size required by the customer.

Not Eiderdown, but IDAGLAS! The finishing-off end of the Bat machine, showing the continuous stream of Idaglas on the conveyor-belt. It is 3-ft. wide, and is cut into 9-ft. lengths.

A cascade of shimmering, shining skeins of GLASS SILK which gives the effect of gleaming satin. It should be noted that this glass silk is an entirely different product from the fibre which is used for making into yarns.

Close-up of a Continuous Filament Furnace looking from the bottom. The operative is drawing a filament of glass (approx. 0·0002 in. dia.) through a hole in the bottom of a Platinum Bushing.

Insulation; and Eutex pure-glass tapes for Electrical Installation, etc. The fabric when woven has a lovely silk-like appearance, but though soft and pliable, it is not suitable for clothing, or for use where it would be much handled. It is hoped, however, that after the war the uses of Fibreglass will be much extended, as its fireproof and acid-proof qualities would render it excellent for making lampshades, theatrical scenery, curtains and so forth, and for use on board passenger ships where avoidance of fire-risk is essential.

This girl is not WRAPPED IN TAFFETAS, BUT IN FIBREGLASS! Though the material is pliable it is not actually suitable for making up into wearing apparel.

PERFECT DOUBLE-MURDER PLAY: "UNCLE HARRY."

The pub. bore about to embark on his long and apparently ridiculous murder story: "*Uncle*" *Harry* (MICHAEL REDGRAVE), *with Miss Phipps* (GRACE DENBEIGH-RUSSELL) *and Mr. Jenkins* (JOHN CLEVEDON).

"*Danger. Don't touch. Gosh!*" *Nona* (SUSAN RICHARDS) *shows* "*Uncle*" *Harry the poison.* "*Uncle*" *Harry has been for years consistently bullied by his sisters.*

"*Oh, Albert, Albert! There you go—vulgarising again*": *Joshua D'Arcy* (ARTHUR DAVIS), "*Uncle*" *Harry, Harold Blake* (HUGH STEWART) *and Albert Sturgess* (JOHN GARSIDE) *enjoy glee-singing practice.*

"*You see, Lettie, the way it is!*" "*Uncle*" *Harry with Lettie and Nona. The terms of their father's will have compelled Harry to live with his sisters.*

"*What have you been reading?*" "*Trying to read some poetry*": *Lettie* (BEATRIX LEHMANN) *with her brother, contemptuously known as* "*Uncle*" *Harry.*

"UNCLE HARRY," by the British-born author Thomas Job, had a long run on Broadway, and was due for its London production at the Garrick on March 29. The scene is a North Country town in England about 1900. "Uncle" Harry Quincey is the pub. bore, always telling people that he murdered his sister Hester, though the crime was brought home to his other sister, Lettie, who was executed for it. The play is the flashback of what really happened, and shows how Harry, exasperated beyond bearing by his nagging sisters, staged a perfect double murder. [PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN VICKERS.]

Pin-up Girl: No. 1. Leslie Brooks.

The Pin-Up Girl goes everywhere on active service with the Navies, Armies and Air Forces of the Allied Nations, bringing gaiety and glamour with her. MISS LESLIE BROOKS, *first of our new series of Pin-Up Girls, is a natural type of American beauty, born in Lincoln, Nebraska. She began her career as a model for fashion photographs, and then became Cover Girl for detective and "horror" magazines. She's now on her way to film fame, and has appeared in "Underground Agent," "You Were Never Lovelier" and "Two Señoritas from Chicago." Her current picture is "Cover Girl."*

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

VIRGINIA WOOLF'S talent was so much a thing by itself that it is difficult to compare her with other writers, even with those who, like James Joyce and Dorothy Richardson, are superficially akin to her. In her critical work she was a traditionalist, using her acute and beautiful mind in the traditional way. She reasoned, she reflected, she saw her subject in perspective, she related it to literature and to life. One could say that she believed in the mind, put her faith in it as an instrument for assessing literary values, absolutely. And no less absolutely did she believe in the intrinsic importance of those values.

The Problem of Personality. But in fiction, when she was considering life, not letters, she does not appear to have accepted the validity of the mind's testimony, or the ability of organised thought to make an adequate representation of what it feels like to be alive. She did not mistrust her insight into books, but she seems to have deeply mistrusted her insight into people. Confronted by a human being, she confessed herself at sea. She did not accept the convention that personality is continuous and self-consistent and capable of being summed up in a single conception; more than that, she did not trust her own mind to integrate what she saw. Perhaps she was sceptical of other people's objective existence; perhaps she was even sceptical of her own. She asked herself questions that could not be answered. "There they were . . . the stars. And he asked himself . . . 'What are they? Why are they? And who am I?' as one does, sitting alone, with no one to talk to, looking at the stars." Thus every human being was to her a closed book without a title, whose contents and nature one might guess at from some mark on the binding; the rest was speculation, food for fancy, bright motes visible in the sunshine, but soon swallowed up in the surrounding darkness, not making a personality or even a pattern—just as her language, abandoning the formalism of ordinary prose, splits into atoms, like a pointillist painter's rendering of light, and shooting up like a rocket, descends in a shower of coloured sparks.

Away from the Surface. Most of the stories in "A Haunted House" illustrate her sense of the essential isolation and separateness of human beings, her conviction that every identity is a mistaken identity. More than once she uses the idea of a guest at a party, a stranger to the others, to whom no one speaks, or, if they do, only to promote embarrassment and misunderstanding. More than one story is a warning, half-playful, half-serious, of the danger of supposing you can tell about people by a casual inspection: "An Unwritten Novel," with its delicious surprise ending, is a particularly good example. Scepticism reigns supreme: the Mark on the Wall may mean anything; "I want to sink deeper and deeper, away from the surface, with its hard, separate facts." And in most cases her instinct seems to have been right. Where she does deal with hard, separate facts (as in "The Duchess and the Jeweller"), she is apt to go astray. She is most herself, most true to her own vision, in "A Haunted House" (two pages of moonlit loveliness) and "Moments of Being"—a title that might serve for most of her stories.

On the Eve in America. "So Little Time" is a novel concerned with the attitude of mind of a cross-section of American society in the twenty months of the war before Pearl Harbour; briefly, with the feelings of Americans before America entered the war. It is an immense subject, and Mr. Marquand has written an immensely long book—three times the length of the average novel. If the story seems sometimes to hang fire, it is because the author has not provided it with an obvious dramatic situation to dangle carrot-wise before his reader. His hero, Jeffrey Wilson, a successful play-adapter by profession, is just old enough to have fought (as an airman) in the last war, and the eldest of his three children will soon be of an age to fight in this. Jeffrey belongs temperamentally to the type of Hamlet: he feels that the time is out of joint. He is too diffident (as, indeed, Hamlet really was) to think that he is born to set it right; but the fact of being extremely self-critical has made him, as often happens, almost equally critical of other people. With one or two exceptions—among whom his wife, the "Socialite" Madge, is definitely not included—man delights him not; no, nor woman neither. Marianna Miller, the film-star, is an exception, but a half-hearted one, hardly worthy of Madge's jealousy; he loves his son Jim; he has a sturdy affection for his spirited, scapegrace brother Alf; he admires and respects his friend of the last war, Minot, who has the qualities and defects of a clubman of assured income and social standing (Jeffrey has risen from the ranks); and he has a weakness for Mrs. Newcombe, drunken wife of the globe-trotting journalist, Walter Newcombe, whose best-selling "World Assignment" caricatures books of that class. But discontented with himself, he is discontented with everyone, and being discontented, he is often disagreeable, especially to Madge, whose conventional outlook and but faint interest in public affairs irritate him more and more. The fight he puts up against nervous irritability is one of the most endearing of his many endearing qualities. But he is always seething with inward protest: he has to beg Minot, for instance, not to go on singing

> Oh, I'm looking for a happy land where everything is bright,
> Where the hangouts grow on bushes and we stay out every night

—a refrain which occurs at intervals through the story and exasperates Jeffrey by its feckless optimism.

War in Fiction. Reviewing in his mind the novelists who wrote about the last war, Jeffrey decides that their "efforts added up to almost nothing; they tried to give dramatic significance to something in which significance was absolutely lacking." If such significance seems lacking in "So Little Time," we cannot therefore blame Mr. Marquand, except by denying his premises (I assume, perhaps wrongly, that Jeffrey is speaking with the author's voice). As a matter of fact, the book is not lacking, but only weak in dramatic significance. Jeffrey's point of view is static until almost the end, when it undergoes a rather sudden conversion from the negative to the cautiously positive.

But the texture of the book is so interesting that, had we but world enough and time (as I hope many of Mr. Marquand's readers will have), we could dispense with the artificial stimulus of a more dramatised method of treatment, and not feel impatient, for instance, when Jeffrey (this is almost the author's only concession to modishness) repeats his interlocutor's remarks with an ironic inflection. Mr. Marquand is in the highest degree intelligent, sensitive and fair-minded. He writes beautifully and has an almost formidable sense of humour. Walter Newcombe, with his catchwords—"Don't get me started on that," and "Without fanfare"—is a superb comic portrait, as is his wife. But even in Mr. Marquand's slightest sketches there is a margin left for the imagination to fill in—a margin which might turn a figure of fun into something quite different. The most trivial characters, like the broken-down boxer in the train, will yield him an important symbol; neither his seriousness nor his humour is bound by hard edges: they reach out into the unknown. And though his mind is luminous with charity and understanding, it is not a soft mind: it discriminates and classifies, although (as far as may be) it refrains from judgment. The breadth of his vision and the minuteness of his observation make him one of the foremost novelists writing in English.

A Raid on Kiel. "Pathfinders" is the story of a night's bombing-raid over Kiel; but that is only the framework of the book. Its subject is the life-stories of the officers and men who flew the Wellington and who, but for the accident of Service conditions, would never have known each other. They came from different walks of life and in some cases from different countries. The front gunner was a Canadian, the navigator a New Zealander, the second pilot an American, the rear gunner a Cockney, the wireless operator a Jew. During the early part of the flight they relive—or rather, Mr. Cecil Lewis relives for them—their past lives and the circumstances that had brought them together. For some, their present employment was the way out of an intolerable emotional dilemma; others, like Hugh Thornly, the one-time pacifist, had a good prospect of happiness to look forward to. I found Hugh's story among the most interesting; it is a kind of symposium in which problems of nationalism and the economic causes of war are very lucidly presented. Lukin's unhappy love-story contains a nostalgic account of Venice; the high-light in Cookson's life had been an encounter in the Pacific between his home-made yacht and a hurricane; Sam had lived a trapper's life in Canadian forests. The Jewish girl whom Peter loved faded from him into a future dark with the menace of Nazi persecution; Nobby's touching and pathetic wife receded into the mists of an incurable illness. In their peacetime lives, light and shade were equally divided. In the crowning adventure over Kiel, the identities of the six men are merged in one supreme experience, breathlessly if (for the layman) almost too technically told.

A little mechanical in design, and written perhaps with more force than subtlety, "Pathfinders" is nevertheless a notable and rousing record of an heroic enterprise.

Peaceful but Not Safe. Mr. Colin Robertson is determined to make us realise that peace has its perils no less spectacular than war. The setting of "Alibi in Black" is neither pre-war, inter-war or post-war, but belongs to an unself-conscious and halcyon period when a motor drive could be enjoyed with a good conscience, and people showed lights whenever they felt inclined.

On the other hand, an assumption that Mr. Robertson's characters ramble about in an atmosphere of security would be wide of the mark, as is proved by the comparatively modest percentage who live to see the last page. The hero is not a man whose brawn exceeds his brains, but he has a natural liking for danger, and the author, indulgent to this whim, finds plenty for him.

THE LONDON GALLERIES.

71st Exhibition of English water-colours. *Agnew's, 43, Old Bond Street.* Till Easter.

The Michael Sadler collection of prints and engravings. New paintings by Ivon Hitchens. *Leicester, Leicester Square.* Till Easter.

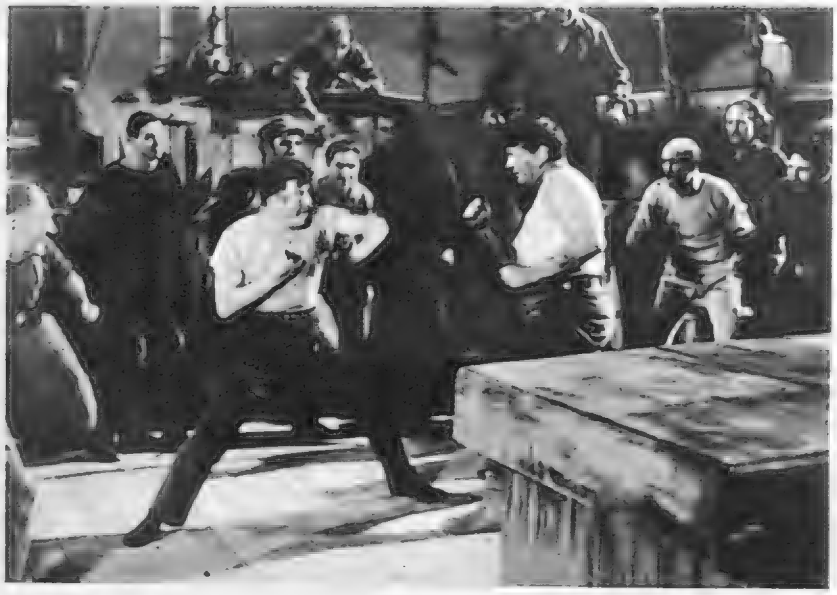
The Polish Air Force Exhibition. *At 61, St. James's Street.* Till April 10.

Paintings by Official War Artists. Canadian War Paintings. *National Gallery, Trafalgar Square.*

BOOKS REVIEWED.

A Haunted House and Other Stories. By Virginia Woolf. (*Hogarth Press; 7s. 6d.*)
So Little Time. By John P. Marquand. (*Robert Hale; 10s. 6d.*)
Pathfinders. By Cecil Lewis. (*Peter Davies; 9s. 6d.*)
Alibi in Black. By Colin Robertson. (*Ward, Lock and Co.; 8s. 6d.*)

Jack London (MICHAEL O'SHEA), *anxious to make quick money, becomes an oyster pirate. He meets waterfront waif, Mamie* (VIRGINIA MAYO).



Sealing in the Bering Seas is Jack's next adventure. He fights the bully, Red John (JOHN KELLY), *and though he takes a lot of punishment, he is victorious.*

JACK LONDON'S ADVENTUROUS LIFE AS A FILM.

JACK LONDON, the novelist, led an adventurous life; and his second wife, Charmian Kittredge, has supplied the material to make an exciting United Artists film of his career (due at the Tivoli last Sunday, April 2). Before he was twenty-one, London had been ranch-hand, sealer, oyster pirate, sailor, Klondyke gold operator and professional revolutionist, and had worked in jute [*Continued below.*

Jack London has achieved literary success. He meets Charmian Kittredge (SUSAN HAYWARD), *an admirer of his books; and falls in love.*

Determined to be a writer, Jack London goes back to school, but Professor Hilliard (HARRY DAVENPORT) *mistakenly tries to curb his genius, and to keep his work on conventional lines.*

Continued.]
mills and factories. He sold his first story at the age of seventeen, but it took fifteen years of work to gain him literary success. When reporting the Russo-Jap War he discovered Nippon's dreams of world conquest, but was not able to induce his editor to publish such a "wild" story. He died in 1916 with fifty-six books to his credit and innumerable short stories. At least thirty feature films have been made from his writings.

When reporting the Russo-Jap war, London meets Tanaka (LEONARD STRONG), *who reveals Japanese plans for world conquest.*

Jack London brings his sensational story of Japan's desire to rule the world to his editor, Kerwin Maxwell (JONATHAN HALE), *who refuses to publish it. Charmian listens to the discussion.*

PROVIDENCE AND THE AIRMAN.*

By GEORGE STERN.

THE airman smiled to himself. A very satisfactory afternoon—very satisfactory. Would have been almost perfect but for the interference of that damned Spitfire. And even then Providence had served the Fatherland with a well-placed bank of cloud. How sweetly his engine was running now. Engine built with a German thoroughness which those poor, foolish British and American engineers thought they could equal. And how sweetly, too, had those new-pattern little bombs whistled down. There was something to perplex decadent British brains! And in particular the brains of the inhabitants of the village of East Hoylby.

Yes. They 'd have good cause to remember a certain tea-time visit by the *Luftwaffe*, would the villagers of East Hoylby. After all, if they chose to work in war factories they must take the risk. Especially when they tried to disguise those factories as barns and farmhouses and schools. For the village was never so big when he visited it—never. He smiled again as he thought of that visit, and wondered how many of the villagers would remember the slim, blond youth who was so interested, so careful in his photography of the ancient stone bridge, so thorough in exploring the coast for miles around.

He looked down and felt a great satisfaction. For was he not now crossing that selfsame coast again; and would it not soon be dusk and he safely within reach of his base? Yes; quite a remarkable second visit. What was that English phrase now?—he was greatly proud of his English. Poetic justice—that was it—poetic justice. He was over the sea now, looking at his maps to confirm his position. All was well. He was dead on his course, and below him and not far ahead he knew were the Sevenrack Shallows, that ill-renowned stretch of sometime water, sometime sand that those stupid villagers seemed to hold in such awe and of which they had told him many tales concerning wrecks and pirates and smugglers and such-like English traditional nonsense. He recalled how he and the rest of the Hitler youths and maidens on that tour had been taken many miles out in an old fishing-boat—nearly falling to bits, in a typical English fashion—for a trip round the shallows and to see the great red buoy that guarded them and warned ships of their danger.

Indeed a satisfactory sortie, and yet—and yet—in spite of himself, something rankled a little. And he hated admitting it to himself, but he knew it was that one damned Spitfire; and he knew, too, that the Spitfire was the cause of that one bomb still left in his rack. True, he had a most excellent report to make to his Commanding Officer; yet his pride was a little hurt, for he disliked exceedingly the idea of landing without having delivered the full load to his English friends. Nevertheless, it would be a great waste to drop it in the sea, and his gas would not allow of a search for shipping. It was all a little annoying. But then, one couldn't have everything.

He banked for a moment to see the round, red sun low over the land, over England; and then, as he straightened, his thoughts wandered back again to the trip in the old fishing-boat, and he reminded himself how fascinated he 'd been when they 'd sailed right close up to the buoy and he saw for the first time what those things that sailors thought so important really looked like. Very much like a big bomb, if he remembered rightly—yes—just like a bomb—a buoy—a bomb—a buoy—a—got it! Of course! What a fool he 'd been not to think of it before! What a cunning bit of work it would be! Yes, he 'd deliver his full load after all!

He put her nose down and turned to starboard, confident in his calculation of his position; confident that when he flattened again just above the grey sea-level he 'd see the buoy just ahead of him. And so it was. For the first few seconds, nothing; but then, very faintly at first, on the horizon ahead. *Ein, zwei, drei,* it blinked. *Ein, zwei, drei*; all lighted and ready, even though it was not yet dark. It might have been specially lit for him! He throttled down. The light grew brighter—disappeared as the angle increased—the little dark blob on the sea came into his sights—perfect! Unerringly he let go—from that height he would not, could not, miss! He turned sharply again, soared skywards, and as he looked back and down he saw the smoke and the spray clearing—but no light blinking.

He sat back and opened her out for home. Nothing to mar his satisfaction now. He fell to musing as darkness came. How many flights was it? Almost lost count. Surely some leave soon, though. Leave to his home town, which the British said they 'd bombed so heavily, but which he knew was as untouched as Berlin itself.

And any time now he 'd be crossing his own coast and then—home. It was a comforting thought as he looked at his instrument-panel. Looked and saw—and looked again. It was true all right; for his altimeter never lied. He was steadily losing height. He gave her a burst at maximum power, straightened out for a few moments, then started to lose again. Maximum power again—no avail. Getting serious now—temperature needle dangerously high as well. What the devil! Oil pressure falling—must do something—right itself, probably. Same thing once before—righted itself; not now, though—altimeter still falling. . . . He could scarcely believe it. Surely Providence hadn't turned against him—now? No! There she was—picking up a bit now. Good! Just a trick to try him, that 's all—but—— Another and swifter drop—a spurt of flame from the cowling. Nothing to worry about really—probably some dirt in the oil-pump—causing overheating—grease burning—that 's all—that 's all. . . . That 's all he could do—too late now, too late! Oil pressure gone altogether. Must jump for it—must jump. He was out of the seat now. Saw for a moment the dull-silvered sea rising to meet him; closed his eyes and jumped.

Far-away voices in his ears, or was it a gurgling of water? He listened, holding his breath lest he should breathe in that water; heart banged incessantly against ribs: could hold it no longer; breath exhaled, then indrawn again; heard himself sigh. Air! Yet still the terrible cold about him. His body seemed to be swaying slightly. But he wasn't in the water now. For what was that above him? A sort of ceiling—white-painted—with beams across; and a round brass thing on the wall opposite, like a ship's port. A ship! That was it. Voices again. Good German voices! He felt warmer, looked around. A thick-set figure in naval uniform was standing by him.

"That was some luck, my boy! We actually saw you come down, and that parachute of yours only opened a few metres above the water! Feeling better now, eh?"

He nodded.

"You just lie there. We 've a job on. Nice convoy coming up, and not so well escorted, we believe. These English are getting a bit slack lately, you know. Well, we 'll show them, eh? We 'll be back before dawn."

He stretched himself more comfortably and closed his eyes again. "That was some luck, my boy!" So it was, too!

Funny, that jump. Remembered it quite clearly, yet somehow couldn't remember why he 'd had to jump. He sat up and rubbed his eyes. Strange—very strange. He 'd been up all right and he 'd had to jump. But before that—before that. . . . Now what was it—now . . . what. . . . He sat on the edge of the bunk, head between fists, brows puckered, then he heard voices again, as if from the adjoining cabin.

"But I 'm positive, Captain, we 're not near there yet."

"Maybe, but we 've run our time all right."

"Yes, yes, I know; but there 's been a strong set against us."

"Very well—but let me see the chart, all the same."

Silence for a moment, and then:

"M-m—yes—quite so, quite so. What 's its visibility?"

"It 's at reduced power now, Captain. I reckon about two miles; and I make us about six miles off."

"What? Look at the clock! If that 's where we are we 'll have to increase at once. And you know what that means—noise, more noise. Are you quite sure——"

There was silence again for a time. Still he sat puzzling it all out. He began to remember—vaguely—England . . . engine trouble . . . but—— The voices interrupted his thoughts again.

"All right! We must take the risk—else lose our quarry! Buoy or no buoy—we must take the risk!"

He heard a faint clanging noise, and then a dull roar from somewhere deep down as the engines opened out. The cabin began to vibrate a little as the E-boat gathered speed. He lay back again and tried to concentrate, but "Buoy or no buoy, buoy or no buoy" were the only words his thoughts could frame. Strangely familiar words they were, too—strangely familiar—buoy—or no buoy—buoy—buoy—b-b-bomb—buoy—bomb—buoy—bomb!

He sat up with a jerk. A great flood of light seemed to fill his head. With voice lifted frantically above the engines' roar, he leapt up to the deck.

"Captain! Captain! That buoy—it is not there any longer! Not there——"

"What d'ye say?"

"That buoy, Captain! It 's gone! I——"

"Better get back below, hadn't you? You 've had a pretty bad concussion, you know!"

"But that buoy! I tell you it 's not there any more! Only a few hours ago I——"

His words were cut short by the crack of a gun. The night suddenly became a pale purple day. Star shell!

"Full ahead!"

The boat leaped forward with an ear-splitting roar, heeled sickeningly as she altered course; almost flying on the surface now they were; still the horrible illumination, then a grinding shudder; the boat slowed slightly with a dizzy motion; engines rose to an inhuman pitch—and suddenly died.

"We 're aground!" came the cry, but no more, for the engines shrieked again—astern, but no movement from the boat. The airman stood amazed; held grimly to a stanchion. Light as day now it was; surely a dream; he must wake up soon. Only Providence up to her tricks again—only a trick—another trick——

But it was the last trick Providence took that night as she slammed down her trump with the crack of a good 4-in.; and when high water came at dawn there was not even a trace of wreckage on the still waters that covered the Sevenrack Shallows. [THE END.

**All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

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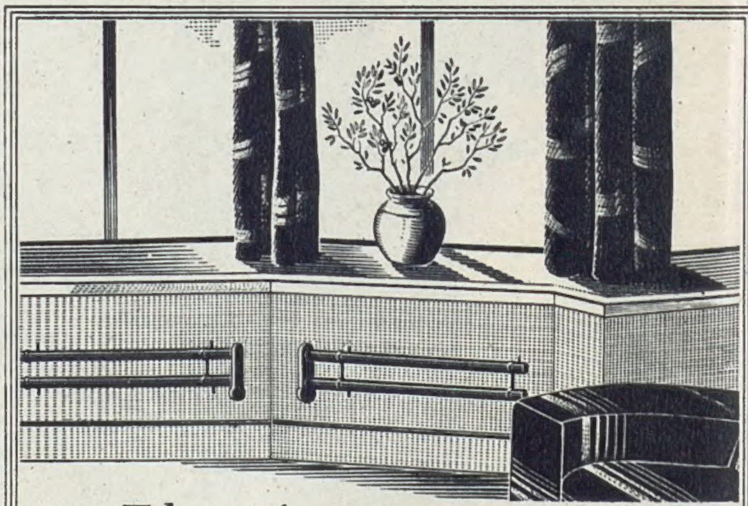

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